

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

# FSIS NOTICE

36-06

6/29/06

## REPORTING OF *SALMONELLA* SAMPLING RESULTS

### I. PURPOSE

This notice provides inspection program personnel with information on how they will receive results in the LEARN system for *Salmonella* sampling in slaughter and processing establishments. It also informs them on how they may record establishment e-mail addresses into the Performance Based Inspection System (PBIS) profile so establishments can receive results directly.

### II. BACKGROUND

On February 27, 2006, FSIS announced in the Federal Register, *Salmonella Verification Sample Result Reporting: Agency Policy and Use in Public Health Protection*, that it will begin providing individual *Salmonella* verification sample test results in the Laboratory Electronic Application for Results Notification (LEARN) system. It also announced that establishments may receive the results directly. FSIS will begin reporting individual sample results and serotype results starting July 1, 2006.

### III. OBTAINING AND REPORTING TEST RESULTS

A. Inspection program personnel should follow FSIS Directive 10,200.1, Accessing Laboratory Sample Information via LEARN, for obtaining test results through the LEARN system. Individual sample results, including serotypes, will be posted to LEARN when each individual sample test is finished. The serotype results are posted up to two weeks after a sample is reported as positive.

**NOTE:** The field size is set at 8-10 characters. Therefore, the results of the different serotypes may be abbreviated. If inspection program personnel have questions regarding serotypes, they should contact the Technical Service Center.

B. At the weekly meeting with establishment management, inspection program personnel should provide any sample set or serotype results reported through LEARN since the previous weekly meeting was held. When a set is complete, inspection program personnel should report the set complete set results to establishment management and indicate whether the establishment passed or failed the complete set. The Complete Set Report results are posted on LEARN.

**DISTRIBUTION:** Inspection Offices;  
T/A Inspectors; PRD; Import Offices

**NOTICE EXPIRES:** 7/1/07

**OPI:** OPPED

C. When discussing individual sample set results, inspection program personnel should be aware that:

1. samples in the sample set are numbered based on the date the sample is collected (i.e., collection date).

2. carcasses rinsed or swabbed for samples may be selected on any production day, including Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The actual rinsing or swabbing is not to occur until the day the sample is shipped.

a. Inspection program personnel are to sponge or rinse the sample on the day it is collected. If inspection program personnel cannot collect and ship a carcass sponge (cattle, swine, or turkey) or chicken rinse sample on the same calendar day, they should randomly select the carcass and hold the carcass refrigerated. Inspection program personnel should complete the sponge sampling or chicken rinse procedure the next business day that overnight shipping can occur.

b. The collection date, as recorded on FSIS Form 10,210-7 is the date that the carcass is sponged or rinsed.

i. If inspection program personnel select carcasses on one day and swab or rinse the carcasses on another; the collection date is still the date that the carcasses are swabbed or rinsed.

ii. For example, if inspection program personnel select broiler carcasses from slaughter shifts on Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday, then inspection program personnel should rinse the chicken carcasses (collecting the sample) on Monday. This is the first business day that overnight shipping can occur.

iii. Inspection program personnel record the collection date as Monday. Inspection program personnel should use the sample forms in numerical order so that the lowest form number is Friday, the next is Saturday, and then Sunday should have the highest form number of the three. The computer database counts the samples collected on the same day in form number order.

3. Normally, a negative sample takes less time to analyze than a positive sample. For example, in broilers, if sample 49 (that is, the 49<sup>th</sup>, sample collected in the set) tests positive, but sample 50 tests negative, it will take a few days longer to complete the biochemical and serological characterization for sample 49 than to complete analysis of sample 50. Thus, this positive result for sample 49 would not be posted to LEARN until after sample 50 is posted.

**NOTE:** Inspection program personnel should randomly collect one sample each production day that the establishment slaughters from the class of product subject to this sampling, until notified to stop sampling. If there are multiple shifts, inspection program personnel should randomly select the shift sampled each day (i.e., collect samples from all shifts throughout the sample set). In addition, inspection program personnel should randomly select the time the sample is collected.

**NOTE:** Notification that a sample has been received at an FSIS laboratory, and that the sample is either analyzable or has been discarded, will continue as per Directive 10,200.1, Accessing Laboratory Sample Information via LEARN.

D. At the completion of a sample set, DMs or their designees will receive a formatted standardized end of set letter from the Program Analysis Staff, OPPED, to send to the establishment describing its *Salmonella* status (See Attachments).

Through the letter, the DM will provide the establishment with information concerning

- a. the number of samples testing positive for *Salmonella* in its last *Salmonella* verification testing sample set,
- b. the *Salmonella* positive samples with serotypes commonly associated with human illness which is high, average, or low for the product class being tested, and
- c. an approximate timeframe for starting the next sample set testing.

**NOTE:** Common human serotypes are the top 20 *Salmonella* serotypes from human sources reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Public Health Laboratory Information System. The top 20 *Salmonella* serotypes are updated annually (see link below).

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/phlisdata/Salmonella.htm>

### **III. ENTERING ESTABLISHMENT E-MAIL ADDRESSES INTO THE ESTABLISHMENT PBIS PROFILE**

A. When requested by establishment management, the Inspector-In-Charge (IIC) may enter the establishment address into the PBIS plant profile or contact the District Office (DO) and request that the DO enter the information into the PBIS plant profile.

Inspection program personnel should:

1. Click the address tab and enter the e-mail address in the box titled "Establishment e-mail address for laboratory results."
2. Enter only one e-mail address for an establishment. If one corporation has many establishments, the same corporate email address can be used for each of their establishments, if it has been entered into each establishment's profile. The PBIS Manual provides instructions for entering the establishment address.

B. The IIC should make establishment management aware that the establishment's Internet Service Provider (ISP) or e-mail client (a program used to read and send e-mails) must be able to accept e-mail from the following two e-mail addresses:

[OPHSLEARN@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:OPHSLEARN@fsis.usda.gov)  
[OPHSPREP@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:OPHSPREP@fsis.usda.gov)

If the establishment's ISP blocks e-mail from these addresses, then the establishment will not receive the sample results.

For technical questions, contact the Technical Service Center at (800) 233-3935.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy S. Dufle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Amy" being more prominent.

Assistant Administrator  
Office of Policy, Program, and Employee Development

## Attachments

«td»  
«Name»  
«city», «state»

Dear «Name»:

As you are probably aware, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is implementing an initiative to reduce the presence of *Salmonella* in raw meat and poultry products. As a result, FSIS' testing focuses on establishments that have a high percentage of *Salmonella* positive test results (from FSIS verification testing), and on establishments whose positive test results include *Salmonella* serotypes that are commonly associated with human illness.

Please be advised that Establishment «establishment» tested at or below half the acceptable number of positive samples that FSIS uses to assess control of *Salmonella* in its last two *Salmonella* verification testing sample sets. These test results indicate that the establishment's process is consistently under control for *Salmonella*. In addition, in the most recent *Salmonella* sample set there were «HHSN» *Salmonella* positive samples with serotypes commonly associated with human illness<sup>1</sup>, which is «high average low» for «Product» *Salmonella* sets. The more samples that are positive for these serotypes, the higher priority the establishment is for FSIS when scheduling new sample sets.

Because it appears Establishment «establishment» has demonstrated consistent process control, the next *Salmonella* verification set will likely not be scheduled for 12 to 24 months from the completion date of the most recent set. Please note, however, that sampling could begin earlier if an event occurs which would call into question the effectiveness of the establishment's process controls for *Salmonella*.

If you have any questions about this risk-based *Salmonella* testing program, please direct questions to the Technical Service Center at 800-233-3935.

Sincerely,

<<Dist Man>>  
District Manager  
Office of Field Operations

<sup>1</sup> Top 20 serotypes of human illness, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/phlisdata/salmonella.htm>

cc: Inspector-in-Charge (via electronic copy)  
Front-Line Supervisor (via electronic copy)  
Washington, DC FSIS HQ Personnel (via electronic copy)

«td»  
«Name»  
«city», «state»

Dear «Name»:

As you are probably aware, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is implementing an initiative to reduce the presence of *Salmonella* in raw meat and poultry products. As a result, FSIS' testing focuses on establishments that have a high percentage of *Salmonella* positive test results (from FSIS verification testing), and on establishments whose positive test results include *Salmonella* serotypes that are commonly associated with human illness.

Please be advised that Establishment «establishment» met the *Salmonella* performance standard (i.e., did not exceed the acceptable number of *Salmonella* positive samples in its last *Salmonella* verification testing sample set). However, since the establishment did not test at or below half the acceptable number of positive samples in the last two *Salmonella* verification testing sample sets, we believe this indicates an inconsistent or variable degree of process control for *Salmonella*. In addition, in the most recent *Salmonella* verification set, there were «HHSN» *Salmonella* positive samples with serotypes commonly associated with human illness<sup>1</sup>, which is «high average low» for «Product» *Salmonella* sets. The more positive samples that are positive for these serotypes, the higher priority the establishment is for FSIS when scheduling new sample sets.

Because Establishment «Establishment» did not test at or below half the acceptable number of positive samples in the last two *Salmonella* verification testing sample sets, a new *Salmonella* verification set will be scheduled no later than 6 months from the completion date of the most recent set. In addition, FSIS may conduct a food safety assessment at the establishment. Please note, if the results of the next two *Salmonella* verification sets are at or below half the acceptable number of positive samples, the establishment will be considered to have consistent process control and FSIS will schedule routine *Salmonella* verification testing less frequently, approximately once every 12 to 24 months from the completion of the most recent set. Validated *Salmonella* controls and monitoring by the establishment are recommended to facilitate consistent process control.

If you have questions about this risk-based *Salmonella* testing program, please direct questions to the Technical Service Center at 800-233-3935.

Sincerely,

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District Manager  
Office of Field Operations

<sup>1</sup> Top 20 serotypes of human illness, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,  
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Please be advised that Establishment «establishment» exceeded the acceptable number of positive samples in its last *Salmonella* verification testing sample set. In addition, there were «HHSN» *Salmonella* positive samples with serotypes commonly associated with human illness<sup>1</sup>, which is «high average low» for «Product» *Salmonella* sets. The more positive samples that are positive for these serotypes, the higher priority the establishment is for FSIS when scheduling new sample sets.

Because Establishment «Establishment» exceeded the *Salmonella* performance standard, a new *Salmonella* sample set will start approximately 30 days after the completion date of the most recent set. In addition, FSIS may conduct a food safety assessment at your establishment. Please note, if the results of the next two *Salmonella* verification sets are at or below half the acceptable number of positive samples, the establishment will be considered to have consistent process control and FSIS will schedule routine *Salmonella* verification testing less frequently, approximately once every 12 to 24 months from the completion of the most recent set. Validated *Salmonella* controls and monitoring by the establishment are recommended to achieve consistent process control.

If you have questions about this risk-based *Salmonella* testing program, please direct questions to the Technical Service Center at 800-233-3935.

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